

## The Critic

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## Matthew Arnold.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, who comes among us this month, as Irving comes, and as Lord Coleridge came in the summer—partly because he was invited, and partly because he wanted to see us—is sixty years old. He will celebrate his sixty-first birthday here; and the next day he may, if he chooses, partake of the Christmas turkey in the neighborhood of Boston. If he does, we sincerely hope he will have something of the old-fashioned appetite, and take the turkey as a New Englander would take it, with a zest. It requires good physical and mental digestion, however, to accept the bird and its accompaniments. Most men—not to say most Englishmen—at sixty-one are a little particular in their diet. Still, among the hearty eaters of the New England bird, Mr. Arnold will be more at home perhaps than elsewhere in America. But whether he likes the barn-yard fowl and us, or not, we propose to like him. He has seasoned many an intellectual feast for good, scholarly Americans. Beginning as far back as 1853, his poetry found readers here as appreciative, possibly more appreciative, than in England. There was nothing for us to forgive in his echo of German Heine. He reproduced only the sweetness and pathos without the folly of the disappointed poet. The love for France and French taste and French refinement was never disagreeable to Americans, for it came unaccompanied by any yearning for Parisian frivolity. It was the German sense of intellectual freedom and the French feeling for grace, superadded to English love of sound essentials, that attracted us. We are not excessive students in the roots, as the Germans are, nor excessively emotional, with the French; and these two elements in Teutonic and Gallic life would have little charm for us. But America would gladly bridge the channel-passage between London and Paris, and it loves the haunts of Goethe. Matthew Arnold brought a hint of the civilization of both nations to us.

Boston got its training in freedom of thought and directness of speech about forty years ago, and found nothing in Arnold to be afraid of in either respect. Goethe had been translated and mastered as well here as in England. Carlyle and Coleridge were well known and read, and Letters had been liberalized here to an extraordinary extent. German writings were eagerly seized, and the new French poets were soon known. By 1860, we were quite ready for Mr. Arnold's most advanced criticism, and scholars in good circles were no inappreciative readers of his early essays. The poetry, which he ceased writing nearly twenty years ago, was found on the best tables beside Lowell's verse, and the essays and criticism that followed were read by all who read good work of the kind at home. The daily papers and the magazines soon made us as well acquainted with the character of the Oxford Professor as with that of the Harvard.

Lowell and Arnold went together—not because they were

alike, but because they occupied like positions, followed like studies, with interests very much alike, with equal talent, and were both representatives of the modern freedom of criticism. We gave Lowell the palm in those days, as since, for mental robustness, Arnold for the more serious genius. We thought Arnold touched the plaintive chords with most effect; but Lowell too could touch them. Lowell was aggressively healthy in tone, but Arnold's tinge of sadness was not unpleasing, and soon became characteristic. The one looked forward with hope to a new civilization which was easily taking the place, whether for better or worse, of the old; the other backward with discouragement upon an old system too strongly intrenched to be readily reformed. We had our mood for each poet, and loved them both. When the two became critics, we still found something in each to set off against the other's best. Arnold had the finer manner—subdued his material, and produced a level and delightful English lawn. He appealed to the refined taste and intellect. Lowell failed to subdue his material, and to give the rural charm of England; but he gave, instead, our granite ledges, with their wild flowers. Arnold came nearer the Greek culture than Lowell, who discovered that there were in America the conditions of the Greek life and growth, and that it was better to spend a hundred years in building up a new Athens than to enter at once into an old inheritance with a loss of the vigor of creation.

But Arnold was ripened under the influence of modern thought. He did not fear the truth, and especially when he had travelled much on the continent and studied there the results of changes which thought had undergone, and had been quickened by the more stirring spirit of scholarship, he grew less and less timid of utterance. He is reported as being somewhat fearful of the effect in America of his fearlessness. But we trust he will find with us an audience of scholars as frank and outspoken as elsewhere. We like frank criticism here, even in theology and social ethics. If he had brought from France the Parisian life, as we find it portrayed in Parisian literature, the Puritan morality would have had something to say; or if he had brought from Germany Socialistic tendencies, he would have found in cultivated society here no welcome. But the circles that frown on earnest and honest exchange of views, made in the interest of 'sweetness and light,' hardly show themselves in public, or in such quarters as those in which he will care to present himself. It was almost a mistake on his part to mention his fears. The mere mention may suggest what would hardly have occurred to the average American. Our system of reporting gives so completely the light and shade of a man's thoughts that his suspicions and fears are conveyed almost as far as his praise.

Our press is free to the very verge of freedom; but, in the end, it conveys a pretty accurate impression of the man as he is. We have a picture of Oscar Wilde, for instance, which it will be hard for us to forget, and one of a certain English actress who has been seen all over the land, which will not easily give place now to a better. The American mind finds neither picture agreeable, and therein it probably differs very little from the English mind. But we have no fear of any very displeasing elements in the photograph which the press will make of Mr. Arnold. His earnestness, his zeal for good culture, his finished workmanship, his search after truth, we shall like. A certain tone of despair, or discouragement, as to the worth of human life, always present in his writings, will not trouble us. Most Americans are too healthy of mind, or too agreeably occupied, to be sad over a life so full of buoyant conditions as their own. We have no time for despair. But minor strains are sometimes pleasant even to the healthy, and those in Mr. Arnold's works find their audience. Pessimism is a fashion with a

few. But our leaning is toward the optimistic. His effort toward bettering the conditions of scholarship, and toward sweetening life in the upper fields of thought, we all know and appreciate.

JAMES HERBERT MORSE.

### Literature

#### Anthony Trollope's Autobiography.\*

ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S Autobiography is as unlike the autobiographies of other men as his novels are unlike those of other novelists. Although he must have known a great many distinguished men and women, there is only the merest allusion to a few of them in this book, and these few are mentioned only in connection with his own literary work. The Autobiography is strikingly like Mr. Trollope's novels. It is in the same natural manner, and is a simple chronicle of the events of his own and his family's life from the year 1815 to about ten years before his death. His boyhood seems to have been particularly unhappy. His family were poor. The mother was kind, but the father was cross. They lived near Harrow, and Anthony was sent to the famous school of that place as a 'sizer.' It was a daily walk of twelve miles, sometimes through muddy lanes and in a pouring rain; so that it may well be imagined that the eighteen months that he was a scholar at Harrow were anything but an agreeable memory in later life. 'I was a sizer at a fashionable school,' he writes; 'a condition never premeditated. What right had a farmer's boy, reeking from the dunghill, to sit next the sons of peers; or much worse still, next to the sons of big tradesmen who had made their ten thousand a year? The indignities I endured are not to be described.' Life at home was almost as wretched as life at school. Anthony's father, a barrister, had no clients. His health was bad, his temper worse, and he spent the last ten years of his life in writing an ecclesiastical encyclopedia for which he had not the ghost of a chance of finding a publisher.

The mother proved the salvation of the family. She had married Mr. Trollope after she was thirty years of age, and, in the first ten years of her married life, had borne him six children, four of whom died of consumption. In 1827, Mrs. Trollope came to America, having been partly instigated by the social and communistic ideas of a certain Miss Wright, who was among the first of the American female lecturers. She went out to Cincinnati, and put the little money she had into a bazar, which was conducted on a sort of Utopian principle and failed completely. While Mrs. Trollope was working in this bazar, she kept her eyes open, and did a great deal in the way of observing the family life of a certain class of American people. When she went back to England she wrote her first book, 'The Domestic Manners of the Americans.' 'Her volumes were very bitter,' says her son, 'but they were very clever, and they saved the family from ruin.' The success of this book was immediate, and netted the author £800 within a few months; and, for more than twenty years, she received a comfortable income from her writings. For the benefit of the father's health the Trollopes moved to Belgium and took an old house just outside the city of Bruges. While there young Anthony secured the post of usher at a school at Brussels. The appointment to a position in the London Post Office called him back to England, and he stopped at Bruges to say good-by to his family. He then saw his father and brother Henry for the last time, and writes: 'A sadder household was never held together. They were all dying except my mother, who would sit up night after night, nursing the dying ones and writing novels the while, so that there might be a decent roof for them to die under.'

Mr. Trollope began his career in the Post Office on a salary of £90 a year. 'On that I was to live in London, keep up my character as a gentleman, and be happy.' He was then nineteen years of age. He remained for seven years in the general Post Office, and when he left it his income had been raised to £140. During the whole of that period he was hopelessly in debt, and, though he does not remember that he was ever locked up, he thinks he was twice a prisoner. With the brightening of his prospects he married, and when he had been a year married his first book was finished. Although it was not particularly successful, he made up his mind to become a novelist. While visiting Salisbury on a mission for the Post Office he spent some time one midsummer evening wandering round the Cathedral, and there conceived the story of 'The Warden,' whence came that series of novels of which Barchester, with its bishops, dean and arch-deacon, was the central site. That one afternoon began and ended his life in a cathedral town. Mr. Trollope seems to have been fond of the characters in his novels. He thinks that Lucy Roberts is, perhaps, the most natural English girl that he ever drew; 'the most natural, at any rate, of those who have been good girls.' 'She was not so dear to me,' he says, 'as Kate Woodward, in "The Three Clerks," but I think she was more like real human life. Indeed, I doubt whether such a character could be more life-like than Lucy Roberts.'

What Mr. Trollope has to say on the novel and the methods of the novelist is particularly interesting. In an article of his published in one of the English reviews, some time ago, he said that a pile of paper, pens and ink were all that was necessary to make the story. But in this Autobiography he says: 'I have, from the first, felt sure that the writer, when he sits down to commence his novel, should do so, not because he has to tell a story, but because he has a story to tell.' Of his methods of writing he says that 'three hours a day will produce as much as a man ought to write, and that he should have so trained himself that he shall be able to work continuously during those three hours. . . . It has become my custom, and is still my custom,' he continues, 'though of late years I have become a little lenient to myself, to write with my watch before me, and to require from myself 250 words every quarter of an hour. I have found that the 250 words have been forthcoming as regularly as my watch went. But my three hours were not devoted entirely to writing. I always began my task by reading the work of the day before—an operation which would take me half an hour, and which consisted chiefly of weighing with my ear the sound of the words and the phrases.' In concluding his Autobiography—as entertaining a book as he has ever written—Mr. Trollope gives a list of his novels with the dates of their publication, and the amount received for each up to 1879. From 1829 to his death this year he wrote fourteen complete novels, and began one which was to appear in *Life*, a London journal. A finished novel from his pen—'An Old Man's Love'—will be published by Blackwood & Sons next year.

#### Prof. Sellar's "Virgil."\*

VIRGIL WAS BORN under a lucky star. The son of a yeoman in a provincial town, he became the idol of his countrymen, friend of Maecenas, favorite of Augustus; he divided the year's leisure between Campania and 'sweet Parthenope,' and left at his death a fortune of ten millions of oesterces. The middle ages revered him as a magician; Dante calls him 'my master and my author'; and for three-score generations he was esteemed the successful rival of Homer, a title which Virgil himself would have been the

\* An Autobiography. By Anthony Trollope. New York: Harper & Bros.

\* Virgil. By W. Y. Sellar. (Roman Poets of the Augustan Age. Clarendon Press Series.) New York: Macmillan & Co.



last to claim. We recall no instance in which a literary reputation has been more persistently inflated.

Modern criticism accords to Virgil a lower but still a distinguished place in the senate of letters. Prof. Sellar, while in the main agreeing with this judgment, appeals to posterity against what he regards as an undue depreciation of his author. The reason of this altered estimate of Virgil may be elucidated from the volume under review. Of the *Eclogues* Prof. Sellar says: 'The susceptibility of Virgil's mind to the grace and musical sweetness of Theocritus gave the first impulse to the composition of the *Eclogues*.' Of the *Georgics* we read: 'The influence, direct and indirect, exercised by Lucretius on the thought, composition, and even the diction of the *Georgics*, was perhaps stronger than that ever exercised, before or since, by one great poet on the work of another.' While of the *Æneid* he says: 'His chief materials were derived from his intimate familiarity with the two great Homeric poems.' It is hard to see why Virgil should ever regain more than a secondary rank as a poet, unless we are to have new standards of criticism.

The book is a perfect storehouse of erudition, and about as interesting as a Latin grammar. The author expatiates and illustrates, conjectures and compares, for four hundred and twenty-three mortal pages, and long before *Finis* we wish we had never been born. The schoolboys to whose use the book is predestined—for the general reader will never demand it—will find a new burden added to existence; while Virgil will not gain a single admirer in spite of all this pedantry. Not that the author is lacking in culture or acumen. No; one does not have even that satisfaction: he is persistently and odiously in the right. One can find no fault with this, for example: 'Nothing shows the perfect sanity of Virgil's genius more clearly than his entire exemption from the besetting sin of our own didactic poetasters of the last century—a sin from which even Wordsworth himself is not altogether free—that of calling common things by pompous names, and of dignifying trifles by applying heroic phrases to them.' But although Prof. Sellar is master of his subject in its details, he fails to grasp it as a whole; the matter is befogged with words, and with every fresh homily one likes his Virgil less and less. The poet is not allowed to speak for himself, except in snatches of a line or two at a time; and it is impossible for one not already familiar with his writings to obtain more than a vague conventional idea of their beauty of color and form. Breadth of treatment is utterly wanting; Professor Sellar handles a poem like a watch, laying bare its mechanism, and prying and poking until all charm is lost. The very hypothesis on which he proceeds implicitly denies all claim to spontaneity in the poet he praises. But, poor commentator! his blindness is his misfortune.

The author enters with painful elaboration into an account of the conditions to which we owe the Augustan literature. But, after all is said, the man Virgil himself was the final cause of the *Æneid*; and it is wrong to omit Virgil's mother from his catalogue of forces. We observe that Prof. Sellar is a victim to the solar myth mania, but apparently in a mild form. The translations which accompany the profuse quotations are nerveless and diffuse, and therefore as unlike the Virgilian style as possible. A word of praise is due the author for his seemingly successful identification—by the inductive method—of Virgil's birthplace on the Mincio.

#### The Middle Kingdom.

THE ONLY FAULT a critic can find with this sumptuous work is that it gives him nothing to do but to read and

\* *The Middle Kingdom. A Survey of the Chinese Empire and its Inhabitants.* By S. Wells Williams, LL.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

praise. The Chinese conception of their country is that of the central country, around which all other lands lie as tributary and inferior. Our idea of Dr. Williams's book, in its present form, is that it is the one book on China—the central volume in the library of books treating of the Chinese world. The personal experience of the author among the sons of Han began in 1833, and continued during forty-three years. From his first landing at Canton, as a 'foreign devil,' until, as virtual Minister of the United States in Peking, he stood before the Dragon Face, this representative American was busy in studying the Chinese, and their language. As printer, scholar, interpreter, editor, lexicographer, specialist and intermeddler with all knowledge, this eminent sinologue was insatiably diligent. Most of what he tells about, he has seen with his own eyes; yet having digested tons of solid books on his theme and threshed out the substance from stacks of monographs and pamphlets, his pages afford us really the best bibliography now known of the best works on China. Not the least merit of the text before us is its readable quality, and, in this respect, the scholar's pen has gained cunning. In the first edition of this work, issued in 1848, despite the richness of material, a stiff and tedious method of narration repelled many readers. Now, a glow of enthusiasm and a mellowness of culture make the style a model for works of this class. Condensation has made many an old page crisp, the change in the space occupied being like that of the grape into the raisin. Doubtful and superfluous sentences have been erased, and everything worthy of preservation has been retained. To keep pace with the labors of specialists and the advance in history, science, diplomacy and Christian missionary results, one-third more matter has been added.

'The Middle Kingdom' of to-day, as portrayed in the book taking its name, is a reformed, and in many respects a modern, nation. 'There is no more for China the repose of indolence and seclusion—when she looked down on the nations in her overweening pride, like the stars with which she could have no concern.' It is not the Chinese only, however, on whom must yet come, or has come, a change of heart. Those whose conception of China is that of a land of rat-eaters need also conversion. No one can now inform himself about the Chinese without seeing in them a civilized nation. Not to know China as civilized argues ourselves barbarians. It would also be well if the average American, and especially the average Congressman, could learn one thing—*vis*: that we are not in any danger of a Mongolian deluge. Dr. Williams shows conclusively what should be commonplace knowledge—that ninety-nine hundredths of the Chinese immigrants in the United States are from the one province of Kwantung, and that emigration from other provinces is rare. In spite of his advanced years and feeble health, our author may yet live to see the absurd and un-American anti-Chinese bill repealed.

Since we are unable to criticise the book, let us point out, for the benefit of those familiar with the old edition, the particular additions or changes made for the present generation of readers. The chapters on the census, laws and administration, on the social life, and on architecture, and those which relate to the conservative side of the Chinese character, will be found improved in style but not changed in substance. The parts treating of natural and political history, chronology, language, literature, religion, commerce, the foreign policy of the Empire, are practically new and show the results of prodigious industry and scholarship. It is quite evident, as Dr. Williams himself believes, that future writers will confine themselves to special or cognate subjects, as Richtofen, Yule and Legge have done, owing to the vastness of the field of knowledge now open. We probably behold in the completed work before us the

last comprehensive synopsis of the Chinese world that will ever be attempted by a single author.

#### Underwood's Life of Whittier.\*

A BIOGRAPHY written in the lifetime of its subject is apt to be unsatisfactory in many ways. The hero of a posthumous memoir too often resembles the George Washington of chromo-lithography—that prim and white-wigged doll, whose nose one longs to pull; but the poor, sheepish man who gazes into the distorted mirror of contemporaneous adulation beholds a veritable Buddha, depicted with more than Chinese artlessness in an attitude of coy fatuity. The inconsistent virtues which are ascribed to him end by neutralizing each other, and every feature is steeped in an equal and unnatural radiance.

One can find no fault of this kind, however, with Mr. Underwood's excellent volume. The writer's generous admiration of his subject is tempered by an unflinching good sense; and although here and there a superlative might be spared or an epithet retrenched, yet the critical faculty displayed is of no mean order. Mr. Underwood has a feeling of the value of words, and his style is clear and incisive; his comments on men and affairs always find a welcome, and one's only wish is that the materials at his command had been less meagre. For to the usual difficulties which attend the writing of biographies like the present, special ones have been added. Mr. Whittier is a song-bird of so shy a species as to have earned the title of 'the Hermit of Amesbury.' His nearest and dearest are dead, and he has never married. Few now living call tell us what manner of man he was at board and hearth, what things were wont to move him to smiles or sadness, what hooks he loved, what foibles proved him mortal.

The letters to which the present biographer has had access are neither numerous nor characteristic; of anecdote there is almost a total dearth; while of certain poems even the date and origin are conjectural, and their author himself can give us no clew. One gets to know but little more of Whittier's self as one reads—at times one is even puzzled to guess by what ravens he was fed; and the effect of the whole string of chapters is that of succession without progression. The biography is written entirely from the outside; but even the barest recital of the story of Whittier's life fixes the attention, so great is the interest and respect which his pure and steadfast character commands. Rare indeed it is, in this generation of gossips,

'When days that deal in ana swarm  
With literary leeches,'

to meet with a biographer possessed of half the reticence which Mr. Underwood shows in dealing with the love-story obscurely hinted at in certain of Whittier's verses. To quote our author, 'Such things are better unsaid—laid away in old receptacles with the dried rosebuds.' Worthy of all commendation, too, is the spirit which leads the biographer to leave unacknowledged or unprinted poems in the twilight to which Whittier has consigned them. We wish Mr. Underwood had always used equal self-restraint. The chapter on the celebration of Whittier's seventieth birthday is an egregious piece of book-making; nor does one see how the compliment so ostentatiously quoted from the Duke of Argyll can increase the poet's fame or the reader's satisfaction. Of errata we notice 'damn' for 'dam'—a slip which we assume must be due to the printer's devil; and that hoary offender, 'à l'outrance,' for 'à outrance.' We suggest to Mr. Underwood the prompt excision of the wretched cuts which deface his volume.

\* John Greenleaf Whittier. A Biography. By Francis H. Underwood. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.

#### Poe's "Raven" Illustrated by Doré.\*

THE ILLUSTRATIONS for this volume were the last work of the kind that was done by Doré. They bear all the marks of his strange and extravagant genius. Only such as he could entertain the idea of illustrating 'The Raven' at all, for the verses of that poem are as far as possible from suggesting pictures. Doré does not attempt, as most illustrators would, to fill up with mere accessories Poe's bare outlines. He boldly brings the spirit of the lost Lenore upon the scene, and with his curious idea of the hero, and the form of the bird of evil omen, and the furnishings (vaguely conceived and illy drawn) of an ordinary room, makes of his pictures a commentary on the text as strange and perhaps as instructive as Poe's own account of the manner of its composition. The volume is further ornamented by a frontispiece by Vedder and an excellent illuminated cover by Miss Dora Wheeler.

Mr. Stedman writes *con amore* when he writes of Poe, and the present study is one of his finest essays in poetic criticism. It is carefully considered, keen and discriminating, and expressed as gracefully as anything we have seen from Mr. Stedman's pen. Nothing is said for effect, though some excellent points are made. The origins of the poem are investigated; its superficial resemblance to certain other lyrics pointed out—the similarity of its rhythmical structure to that of 'Lady Geraldine,' for instance; and yet the value of the poem is declared to lie—as it certainly does—in its originality. 'In sheer poetical constituents,' says Mr. Stedman, the poem here considered 'falls below such pieces as "The Haunted Palace," "The City in the Sea," "The Sleeper," and "Israfel." . . . But "The Raven," like "The Bells" and "Annabel Lee," commends itself to the many and the few.' It is not strange that in France, where Poe's genius received almost its earliest recognition, it should have commended itself to a painter who, though less of an artist than Poe, was yet equally enamored of the wired and the grewsome. Mr. Stedman's closing paragraphs are devoted to Doré, and to the series of illustrations—his last work on earth—which accompany the text of this poem.

#### "A Woman of Honor."†

HAVING GREATLY LIKED and praised Mr. H. C. Bunner's open letter on the subject of 'New York as a Field for Fiction' in the September *Century*, we are surprised and disgusted on turning the pages of his own novel, 'A Woman of Honor.' In it he has given us something far worse than anything that he has found fault with from others. In his letter he objected to the frivolity and flatness of the society novel that deals with little but dinner-tables and dog-carts, napery and drapery, expensive furniture and toilets from Worth; he found it strange that there should be novelists who will have it that there is nothing in New York social life more interesting than can be shown 'in a report of Mrs. Blank's kettledrum or Mrs. Dash's theatre party, or than we may study in the columns of *The Society Journal* or *The Upholsterers' Weekly Chippendale*;' but what does Mr. Bunner himself give us, when his own turn comes? He gives us a story made up of insults and intrigues, of married women's flirtations and married men's infidelities, of lovers' quarrels, indelicate if not indecent. And the worst of it is that this is not the carelessness and unconventionality of Bohemia, willing that its indiscretions should be known and ready to bear the consequences of its sin or folly, but the clandestine horror of underhand guilt or indiscretion, 'carried on' so quietly that even the servants in the houses are never aware that anything has 'happened.' Mr. Bunner, it is true, has

\* The Raven. By Edgar Allan Poe. With 25 Full-page Illustrations by Gustave Doré, and Comment on the Poem by E. C. Stedman. New York: Harper & Bros.  
† A Woman of Honor. By H. C. Bunner. Boston: Osgood.



nothing to do with the foolish extravagances of the *nouveaux-riches*; but is it any improvement that his folly and sin are located in families with grandfathers—families with genuine and inherited wealth and culture, where, if anywhere, we should look for refinement and intelligence and virtue?

'A Woman of Honor' is simply another of those novels which make the reader exclaim, 'Are the upright, honorable, charming people that I personally know, the only decent people in the city of New York?' It is a novel made up of 'scenes.' When there is not a 'scene,' it is because husband and wife have avoided one by dodging each other on the staircase or behind the *portières* of a friend's house, or because the hero has insulted the heroine by his suspicions and advice to such a degree that she refuses to see him when he calls. The whole tone of the book is lowering. A 'gentleman' is a man who does not insist on looking behind the screen in his friend's room when his friend asks him not to; a man of 'honor' is one who joins his friend in escapades, but never 'tells on' him; a 'woman of honor' is one who goes alone to her lover's studio in the evening, on a perfectly innocent though sentimental errand, and then voluntarily subjects herself to a suspicion of not being innocent to shield another lady whom she finds there. A 'friend' is one who brings about a reconciliation between husband and wife by a trick, after having pried into their secrets and secured their letters.

Mr. Bunner's book is not weak: little bits of the talk are very bright; some of the brief, too brief, descriptions of sunlight, moonlight, or 'effects,' are vividly fine; Megilp, the model, would have been delicious in a short sketch by himself; and it must be confessed that the little trick of the letters is ingenious and amusing, quite as good in its way as the Marjorie Daw surprise. The pity of it is that things like these should be the merest episodes in a novel of which the less read the better.

#### Minor Notices.

WE HAVE BEFORE US two volumes—two small volumes of just the same size and shape, and each bearing the name of Henry Irving on the cover; but neither is the authorized Life of Irving by Austin Brereton, which has been so well announced. One of these is an American, the other an English book. The former is published anonymously by W. S. Gottsberger, and is simply a compilation. It contains much useful information. The latter is published by Scribner & Welford and written by Mr. William Archer. It contains much useful criticism. From these two volumes the reader will get some idea of the distinguished English actor—whether the correct one or not we cannot yet say. He will at least see that Mr. Irving is an actor about whose genius there is a great difference of opinion. From Mr. Archer he will get the better idea of what Irving has done in his art—what are his peculiarities, his faults, his excellences. From the other writer, or compiler, he will learn as much of the actor's life as has yet been given the public; for anything further he must await Mr. Brereton's biography. Yet another volume of stage biography lies before us: a 'Life of Helena Modjeska,' taken by J. T. Altemus—a cheaply gotten up book, the biographical part of which seems to have been rewritten and condensed from Mabel Collins's 'Helena Modjeska,' published by W. H. Allen & Co., of London, and padded with extracts from the written opinions of a handful of critics. It is well that the public should read the life of so distinguished an actress and fine a woman as Mme. Modjeska. In the record of her career there is much to learn and to admire; but we could wish that the story had been better told than by either Mr. Altemus or Mabel Collins.

MR. J. W. BOUTON is the fortunate publisher of Adrien Marié's 'Une Journée d'Enfant,' which had such a great success in France last year. Although a few copies found their way to this country then, it comes to us now as virtually a new book. It is seldom that an artist of M. Marié's reputation turns

his talents to the depicting of child life, and it is doubtful if another could so happily catch the spirit that is found in this series of heliogravures. We see by these charming pictures that children are the same all over the world; this little French Lili is so exactly like one's own Toddlekins that he feels that this must be his child's day also. Whoever is privileged to know a child of two or three years of age on terms of intimacy will appreciate the naturalness of these pictures, from the 'Bonjour Mama,' to the 'Bonsoir, Bébé.' M. Marié is certainly a fond father, for there is more than an artist's cleverness in these drawings. They show the hand of one who delights in every curve of the plump little legs; to whom every dimple in the chubby little hands is a jewel; and for whom there is nothing more beautiful than the unconscious grace of childhood. Old bachelors may not find any great charm in this book, but to fathers and mothers and maiden aunts it will be a constant source of delight.

'THE DIOTHAS,' by Ismar Thiussen (New York: Putnam), professes to be 'a far look ahead,' as far indeed as into the XCVIth Century. The author is an optimist, who foresees that by that time we shall have not only malleable glass and the extreme perfection of telegraph, telephone and elevated roads, but no servants (or rather all servants), no disagreeable people, no politicians, no drones, no rich, no poor, but everything on a dead level of perfection. It is safe to assert that things will not be as they are here represented in a million years; but we may also add that we certainly hope they will not. Indeed, we could almost suspect the author of a cordial desire to make us contented with our present imperfections, but that the flavor of intentional burlesque is certainly wanting. The situations imagined are too extravagant to be clever and too incredible to be amusing.

EVERY ONE with three dollars to spare for a book should buy 'The Boy Travellers in Africa,' by Thomas W. Knox. (New York: Harper.) It is the fifth and last volume of 'The Boy Travellers in the Far East,' but, like the others, it is complete in itself, without definite connection with the rest of the series. It is not merely an excellent book for boys and girls, though they will be sure to like it, but a book to interest every one. It contains a vast amount of information, given in a style equally removed from the dry dulness of an encyclopædia and the somewhat trying condescension of the Mr. George of the Rollo books, and the illustrations, one for almost every page, are fine. Far from assuming any ability to judge the accuracy of so many facts, we are glad to confess that we have learned from it a great deal that we did not know.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & Co. have brought out an edition of the 'Book-Lover's Enchiridion' which has the advantage over the English edition that it can be read without blinding the reader. The book is larger and the type bold and clear. The American editor has made some omissions from and some additions to the original, among the latter being the initials A. I.—those of the English compiler, Mr. Alexander Ireland. Most of the additions are well made, but there is still the strange omission of the names of two of the most famous book-lovers and writers about books in the world—Dibdin and Burton. Otherwise the book is quite complete and attractive in matter and make-up.

MERE REFERENCE to the index of 'Early Chroniclers of Italy,' by Ugo Balzani (E. & J. B. Young & Co.), will show it to be of interest chiefly to historical students; but these will certainly find it of value, and even a general reader will find himself interested in many parts of it, from the clear, concise summary of such a character as Gregory VII., and from a distinct atmosphere of personality with which the compiler has surrounded historical events.

'THE STORY OF ROLAND,' by James Baldwin (New York: Scribner)—finely written, beautifully bound, illustrated, and excellent printed—is a charming gift book for either a boy or a girl. What gives it its chief value is that the ringing loftiness of style tends to prejudice the youthful mind less in favor of rank and splendor and knightly adventure than in behalf of courtesy, loyalty, and knightly virtue.

MR. R. WORTHINGTON has ready the first issue of 'Worthington's Annual.' Whether it will be the last, he says, depends entirely upon the public, and he seems to feel confident that the young folks, at any rate, will sustain his venture. Certainly there is no lack of variety in the book. There is not a page without an illustration, some of them woodcuts from charming drawings by Miss Kate Greenaway, others lithographs in color. There is as much variety in the subjects treated as in the illustrations; and the children are given, besides the usual style of children's pictures, portraits of Emerson, Darwin, Longfellow and other distinguished men, with one of Adelina Patti singing at an orchestral concert. 'Worthington's Annual' has no rival in respect to quantity, and the quality of many of its woodcuts is to be highly commended.

THE PREVAILING ELEMENT of Mr. Isaac Flagg's 'Pedantic Versicles' (Boston: Ginn, Heath & Co.) is funniness. The funniness is sometimes really funny, especially in difficult rhyming, but it is oftener coarse.

#### Recent Fiction.

IT WOULD SEEM as if almost any one could write a novel of incident who should feel at liberty to create such extraordinary material as one finds in 'A Righteous Apostate,' by Clara, Marchioness Lanza. (New York: Putnam.) Two pair of cousins, for instance, who should resemble each other, in pairs, as closely as twins, except of course for a saving mole on the neck, ready for any emergency of identification, are a host in themselves for a distressed novelist. When we add to this a fortune left to one pair of cousins which the other pair secure for themselves by gently loosening a strap at the back of the stage-coach in which the party are travelling across the plains from Santa Fé, so that the superfluous cousin falls out in her sleep and is never again heard from, the reader will be able to forecast as much as possible of a novel in which nothing happens but the unexpected. It is certainly an original feature that the criminals enjoy their ill-gotten gains to the end, haunted only by conscience, and that we are left in ignorance as to the fate of the superfluous one, whose body even was never found. In the midst of so much physical tragedy, one almost forgets that the theme of the story is supposed to be the spiritual tragedy of a priest in love, though this really plays an important part in the general unpleasantness.

'THE HOOSIER SCHOOL-BOY' (New York: Scribner), with its novel cover and really fine illustrations, is certainly a very attractive gift-book, and that it is written by Edward Eggleston is sufficient guarantee that it contains nothing objectionable. It does not seem to us, however, wholly pleasing in tone; for although its object is to show the difficulties with which really ambitious boys had to contend in what was the Far West in the early part of this century, the manly efforts of the young hero to secure the coveted education will, we think, hardly make as much impression upon susceptible youth as the accounts of old-time dogged conflicts between the old-fashioned brutal school-master and his 'mixed' class of pupils.

THE POINT of Jules Verne's colossal joke in writing a poor imitation of 'Robinson Crusoe' in his 'Godfrey Morgan' (New York: Scribner) is not apparent until the very last chapter of a pretty long book. Even then the joke of a desert island found to be stocked with stuffed animals whose jaws move with a spring, with a trained city servant disguised to play Man Friday—provided by a wealthy uncle who had paid four millions for the island to cure his nephew of all desire for travel—does not seem to us 'immense.'

'HART AND HIS BEAR,' by A. G. Riddle (Cleveland: Cobb, Andrews & Co.), is a delightful book for young people. Girls will find it as interesting as boys will; for although it is a tale of pioneer life in Ohio in the early part of the century, and therefore full of stirring adventures with bears, wolves, pike, snowstorms and fires, its tone is one of unusual delicacy and refinement; while in many parts it is as good as an entertaining object-lesson in its account of the habits of animals and the procession of flowers. We like it particularly.

#### Fiction in the November Magazines.

THE *pièce de résistance* of *The Atlantic* is still Mr. Crawford's 'Roman Singer,' in chapters of mingled love and art.—Mr. Lathrop's 'Newport' is, to say the least, too ambitious in its title. As it progresses we still have but a single phase of Newport life; the phase of shoddy fashion, of which we learn too much from the newspapers. Mr. Lathrop gives us nothing as yet of the halcyon days, the dreamy poetic languor, the sunny bay, the wild and lonely second beach, the picturesque fashion of the avenue as seen from a standpoint in the distance, the noble and fascinating cliffs, with the untamed ocean on one side and the most highly perfected landscape-gardening on the other; nor would one imagine for a moment, if one did not know, that this summer haunt of his Octavias and Josephines and Oliphants was the spot that has harbored for long months at a time such visitors as Julia Ward Howe, 'Tom' Appleton, Bancroft, Richard Hunt, Col. Higginson, the Warings, Sarah Woolsey, 'H. H.,' Clarence King, Prof. Cook, Prof. Rogers and Alexander Agassiz.—The short story of *The Atlantic* is one of the very best of Sarah Orne Jewett's—a sketch, as usual, of gentle rusticity, but much more dramatic than usual.

In *Harper's*, 'A Castle in Spain' ends happily at last, through the medium of coincidences of which the author naively remarks that they 'are frequent in real life, and still more frequent in our "Castles in Spain." Outlandish as the story has been, and little as one would covet the distinction of having written it, it is impossible not to laugh over the inexpressible drolery of these closing chapters.—There is but one other story in the number, 'Ken's Mystery,' by Julian Hawthorne—imaginative, but unpleasant and impossible; for we suppose there is too much truth in the account of the 'Hashish-House in New York' for us to treat that as fiction, though we are tempted to call attention to it as admirably written.

One suspects *The Century* of having forgotten itself and issued its Holiday Number a month in advance, such a festive number is that for November. The poetry and the pictures—both unusually fine in quality—contribute most to this effect; but fiction such as 'The Bread-Winners' and Cable's 'Dr. Sevier' adds very much. The author of 'The Bread-Winners,' in an Open Letter, announces his desire to make the working-man see 'that, in joining a secret society which compels him by oath to give up his conscience and his children's bread to the caprice or ambition of any "Master Workman" or "Executive Council," he is committing an act of folly whose consequences he cannot foresee, and placing himself in the power of an utterly irresponsible despotism.' There are not wanting those who proclaim the author in league with the unsympathetic aristocrat; but the readers are not few who will see behind the apparent coldness to the poor man a strong sense of the dignity of man; a belief in the universal brotherhood of man that looks with suspicion on any lesser brotherhoods, and that would, perhaps, with Dr. Holmes, find in the 'for Thy sake' of the Christian somewhat too narrow an exercise of its love for its fellows. Mr. Cable, who we know could be trusted for his facts and admired for his skill, takes the trouble to be charming in the opening chapters of Dr. Sevier; the picture of the young convalescent wife being beautifully given. The author of 'Guernedale,' in his short story, 'Mrs. Knollys,' makes picturesque and powerful use of an actual incident which has lately been going the rounds of the newspapers. Mr. James's first part of 'The Impressions of a Cousin' is a little puzzling and not particularly interesting; but we shall all read the second part none the less.

In *Lippincott's*, the chapters of 'The Jewel in the Lotos' are particularly fine, being full of local color and delicate feeling.—Ouida's sketch, 'At Camaldoli,' is very poor, and as the children say, not at all 'worth while'; and 'Black Spirits and White' is rather a foolish story recalling the days of the short-lived *Planchette*; but 'A Village Poet' is a really thoughtful and suggestive little story, with its theme of the great harm done by people who insist on doing good.

It is a great satisfaction to chronicle that in the October *Continent* we have the last of 'Belinda.' 'Judith' continues to be very fine, and we are tempted to mention, in connection with the young women raising strawberries in Helen Campbell's 'What-to-do Club,' the fact that women are finding a large field for easy usefulness in Kansas, by raising silkworms, which are found to thrive as well on the Osage orange of the west as



on the mulberry leaf. The short stories are none of them poor, but the best is Harriet Prescott Spofford's 'An Ideal,' one of the stories in which this eloquent writer has lately been showing us an unexpected gift for delicate, dainty mischief.

### Experience.

I HEAR the sigh of seeds that yearn  
To deck with pomp their burial-urn,  
Ecstatic rhapsodies that run  
Along the bark that feels the sun,  
The laugh with which the buds unfold,  
The passion in the pollen's gold ;  
I hear the faint, delicious beat  
In hearts of roses, converse sweet  
In airs that toy, at twilight's hour,  
With apple-bloom and orange-flower,  
The am'rous whispers of the grass  
As sky-larks brood and fire-flies pass,  
The dews desire, and griefs that make  
The thunder's fiery heart-strings break.  
To me are told the dreams that lie  
Deep in the lily's languid eye,  
Legends that ferns and corals store  
In books of rock and Ocean's floor,  
The prayers that out of pastures cry  
When scorched beneath a brazen sky,  
Strange syllables that from the ground  
Speak like the naked soul of sound,  
And all the birds in love relate  
Of happy flight and tender mate,  
And what the tribes of insects tell  
Of their incessant miracle,  
Sea-song, and joy of human speech,  
And awful lore the star-depths teach ;  
And touching thus the inner Mind,  
I go enraptured, awed, resigned.

HORATIO NELSON POWERS.

### The Lounger

I AM SORRY to see that a recent paragraph in this column has almost led to bloodshed. I stated, on excellent authority, that Major Walthall, who acted as Jefferson Davis's amanuensis for a time, had written in three years but three hundred pages of manuscript, though he had received large sums of money from Messrs. Appleton. This paragraph was copied into the *Pensacola, Fla., Commercial*, where it was read by Major Walthall himself, now editor of the *Advance-Gazette*, a rival *Pensacola* paper. The gallant Major regards the republication of this note in the *Commercial* as a gross breach of editorial courtesy, and sends the editor a letter which the latter interprets as a challenge to fight. Fighting in such a cause, however, is not to the latter's taste, and he declines to gratify the supposed wishes of his rival. A long article in the *Advance-Gazette*, written by Major Walthall, concludes as follows :

"As to the specific charges copied from a more respectable source, they are brought to our notice for the first time, and the *Commercial* is entitled to our thanks for doing so, with whatever purpose it has been done. It affords the writer hereof opportunity for making a statement of facts from which he has heretofore been precluded. This will, however, require some documentary evidence not immediately accessible, and which it will require some little time to procure. Meanwhile it is sufficient to say that the statements of the New York CRITIC are false, as will be shown in due time, D. V."

I am afraid Major Walthall's 'documentary evidence' will not be readily forthcoming, but am quite willing that he should take his own time to procure it. His promise of proof, it will be observed, is conditional. There is much virtue in D. V.

MR. ARNOLD's lecture on 'Numbers' at Chickering Hall on Tuesday night was a noteworthy event. It brought the distinguished poet and critic face to face with many of his American admirers. The hall was crowded, and those who were near

enough to the speaker to hear his voice were greatly pleased with the address. But Mr. Arnold is not an orator, and has yet to learn the art of pitching his voice in the right key to fill a large auditorium. Scattered about the hall were many representative men, most of whom had had the pleasure of meeting and talking with Mr. Arnold at the reception tendered to him by Mr. Carnegie, a few evenings before.

PROF. BOYSEN has submitted to the management of the Madison Square Theatre the manuscript of an original play. So have a thousand others who thought they possessed the gift of dramatic authorship. Mr. Boyesen differs from 995 of the persons in question, however, in this important respect—that his play has persuaded the management to think as he thinks on the subject of his ability as a dramatist. In other words, his manuscript has been accepted. Its title is, 'An Alpine Rose.'

SPEAKING of the Madison Square : I wonder what can have induced Mr. Henry James to abuse Mrs. Burnett's 'Esmeralda' in *The Pall Mall Gazette*. His own play was refused by the management which accepted hers. I do not believe this prompted his attack. It should, however, have averted it.

BJORN BJORNSSON, the eldest son of the poet Björnsterne Björnson, is an actor at the Hamburger Stadt Theatre. He has recently made a great hit as the fanatic father in Schiller's 'Maid of Orleans.' The Hamburg papers highly commend his performance. Björnsterne Björnson himself has just completed two dramas, one entitled 'A Glove' and the other 'Over Evne' ('Beyond his Powers'). They are of a metaphysical character and scarcely adapted to stage representation.

MR. BRANDER MATTHEWS's play—which is as yet unnamed—will be brought out at the Court Theatre, London, about Christmas. If I am not mistaken, it is the only play by an American that has been seen in England before its production in this country since John Howard Payne was employed as hack dramatist at one of the London theatres.

### Notes

'THE BREAD-WINNERS,' which is running through *The Century* with such success, will be published in book-form by Harper & Bros.

MR. TROLLOPE says in his Autobiography that he never received any money for the sale of his books in America and does not think that his publishers were ever paid five per cent of the cost of the books. This statement will not stand against the facts. Messrs. Appleton paid Mr. Trollope's publisher, Mr. Virtue, £300 for 'Ralph the Heir' which ran as a serial through their *Journal*, and the Messrs. Harper paid Mr. Trollope and his publishers the sum of £3000.

MR. EDGAR FAWCETT has engaged to write a novel of New York Society for *The Week*, the political and literary review about to be started in Canada. The story will be called 'The Adventures of a Widow.'

*The Christian Union* of Nov. 1 is enlarged two pages, and gives its readers a full list of holiday and fall publications for their guidance in the purchase of new books. It contains articles by Phillips Brooks, Edward Everett Hale, Emily Huntington Miller, a paper on Matthew Arnold by Hamilton W. Mabie, an illustrated article on the Home Library, and letters from Boston, Chicago and Washington.

In her paper on Tennyson in the Christmas number of *Harper's Magazine* Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie closes with this pleasant paragraph : 'It is a gain to the world when people are content to be themselves, not chipped to the smooth pattern of the times, but simple, original, and unaffected in ways and words. Here is a poet leading a poet's life ; where he goes there goes the spirit of his home, whether in London among the crowds, or at Aldworth on the lonely height, or at Farrington in that beautiful bay. The last time I went to see him he was smoking in a top room in Eaton Square. It may interest an American public to be told that it was Durham tobacco from North Carolina, which Mr. Lowell had given him. I could not but feel how little even circumstance itself can contribute to that mysterious essence of individuality which we all recognize and love. In

this commonplace London room, with all the stucco of Belgravia round about, I found the old dream realized, the old charm of youthful impression. There sat my friend as I had first seen him years ago among the clouds.

It has been decided for the second time recently that in England 'there is no copyright in the title of a book.' The case came up in court as to the title of a novel called 'Night and Day,' by Mr. Lewis Morris. Mr. Allingham had copyrighted the title some time before, but that fact did him no good and the case went against him. Fortunately for American authors, the law is not the same in this country.

The next issue of *Harper's Bazar* will contain the first instalment of a new story, by F. W. Robinson, entitled 'The Man She Cared For.'

A. C. Armstrong & Son have nearly ready a 'History of Art in Chaldea, Assyria, and Phœnicia,' by Georges Perrot and Chas. Chipiez, translated and edited by Walter Armstrong, in two volumes, with more than 500 illustrations, uniform with 'Art in Ancient Egypt' and Muntz's 'Raphael—Life and Works.'

Rev. Leonard Bacon has prepared a volume of 'Luther's Hymns,' thirty-six in number, for which he has written an introduction and copious notes. The music has been taken from the best sources and the text will be printed in German and English. The book is to be published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Pickwick & Co., Philadelphia, have in press 'American Greek Testaments: A Critical Bibliography of the Greek New Testament as Published in America,' with two fac-simile illustrations, by Prof. Isaac H. Hall.

The Springfield *Republican* says that 'Pascoe, the London journalist, who is writing those letters to THE CRITIC on London publishers, used to be on the Boston press, and was one of the founders of the Papyrus Club.'

*The Continent* is to be published hereafter in New York. It has become necessary, says the editor, to put the magazine in 'the great centre of our American thought and enterprise.'

We go to New York because we have grown to the full measure of the opportunities in which we have lived, and demand more room for completer development.' Though a church-member, a Republican and a temperance man, Judge Tourgée declares that he has gained in Philadelphia the ardent support of a liquor dealer, an infidel and two Democrats. *The Continent* is welcome to New York.

*The Magazine of Art* will enter upon its seventh year with the number for December, which is to contain an original etching by R. U. Macbeth, entitled 'Lady Bountiful.' The premium to new subscribers will be a large etching by Henry Farrer, illustrating 'Evening by the River.' The publishers—Messrs. Cassell—declare, and we can well credit the hackneyed promise, that no effort or expense will be spared to make the new volume more valuable than any of its predecessors.

Not content with editing a successful weekly, Mr. Holden of *The Yonkers Gazette* is about to start *The Yonkers Daily Record*. 'No cuts, stereotype plates, immoral or fraudulent advertisements will be inserted in either paper.'

Tourguéneff's 'Poems in Prose,' with a portrait frontispiece and an introduction, is announced by Cupples, Upham & Co.

Mr. J. T. Trowbridge, himself a capital story-teller, contributes to the November *St. Nicholas* an article on Capt. Mayne Reid which, in view of the very recent death of that prince of story-tellers, will be read with what the paragraphers call a melancholy interest. A large part of the sketch is devoted to an account of some of the Captain's adventures as a volunteer in the American Army in Mexico, in 1847. It was of this war that Mayne Reid meant to have written a bulky history, had his life been spared; as it is, his last work was done for *St. Nicholas*. The story of Terra del Fuego—the Land of Fire—has already been announced by the publishers of that magazine.

'By-Ways of Literature,' by President Wheeler of Allegheny College, late editor of *The Methodist*, 'a series of essays on things old and new in the customs, education, character, literature and language of the English-speaking people,' is announced by Funk & Wagnalls.

Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co. are preparing a paper-covered edition of 'The Schonberg-Cotta Family,' similar to their edition of Mr. E. P. Roe's 'Barriers Burned Away,' to be ready in time for the Luther Celebration.

Messrs. Putnam have in press 'The Franco-American Cookery Book,' by Felix Delice, caterer of the New York Club. The next volume of the New Plutarch Series published by this house will be 'Marie Antoinette,' by Sarah Tytler. They also have ready for publication 'English as She is Spoke: Her Seconds Part,' issued by arrangement with Field & Tourn.

'Captain Phil' is the title of a new book for boys by M. M. Thomas, which Messrs. Holt have in press. It relates a boy's experience in the Western Army during the Civil War, and is illustrated with eleven full-page pictures. A somewhat similar book, to be published by the same house, is 'The Drummer Boy'—the story of a boy of the French auxiliary army in the American Revolution, by Louis Rousselet, translated by W. J. Gordon, with twelve full-page and many minor illustrations.

'Under the Red Flag' is the title of a new novel by Miss Braddon which the Messrs. Harper have in press.

Lord Lytton's Autobiography, which Harper & Bros. will publish about the middle of this month, is introduced by a few words from his son, the present Lord Lytton, known to literature as Owen Meredith. The exact date of his father's birth is not given in the Autobiography because it was not known by him.

If some curious impertinents are anxious to know in what year of our Lord that event took place, let them find out for themselves,' he says in the Autobiography, and when questioned about it, he would laughingly reply, 'It is a Cretan mystery.' The son, however, has been the curious impertinent to solve the Cretan mystery for he has discovered by reference to the register of the parish church of St. Mary-le-bone, Middlesex, that Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer was born on the 25th of May, 1803, but he was not baptized until the 15th of March, 1810. The house he was born in, No 31 Baker St., London, is now occupied as a milliner's shop.

## Advice to Verse-makers

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CRITIC:

You have given valuable Courses of Reading for mathematical students, and others. Now, why may not something be done for those who are striving to overtake the procession of poets? Not the advice usually given verse-makers—1st. Don't. 2d. But if you will, be sure you have something to say, and stop when you've said it. 3d. Write on one side of the paper only. 4th. Enclose stamp. 5th. Study the works of the best writers—but something a little different. For instance, inform us where may be found the best example of the sonnet, the rondeau, the triolet, etc., also what rhyming dictionary, if any, be needed, and anything else of value which may occur to you. Your reward will come in seeing fewer badly-formed verses inflicted on a long-suffering public.

LYNN, MASS., Oct. 29, 1883.

L. F. S. B.

[It would be difficult to devise five better rules than those which our correspondent has quoted. The best examples of the sonnet may be found in Mr. David M. Main's 'A Treasury of Sonnets' (New York: Worthington), and in Mr. T. Hall Caine's 'Sonnets of Three Centuries' (Boston: Clarke & Carruth). Excellent examples of the triolet and rondeau may be found in Mr. Dobson's 'Vignettes in Rhyme' (New York: Holt) and in Tom Hood's 'The Rhymester,' edited by Arthur Penn (New York: Appleton). The latter book is a capital rhyming dictionary. One needs only to master its contents to become a finished poet. An admirable account of the rules and growth of the sonnet is given in Pattison's edition of Milton's Sonnets in the Parchment Series. The best and fullest discussions of the French forms of verse are to be found in M. de Banville's 'Petit Traité de Versification' and M. de Gramont's book on 'Les Vers Français.' In English there is Mr. Gosse's 'Plea for Certain Exotic forms of Verse' in *The Cornhill Magazine* of July, 1877, and Mr. Dobson's 'Note on some foreign forms of Verse' appended to Adams's 'Latter-Day Lyrics.']

## The Drama

MR. HENRY IRVING made his first appearance before an American audience last Monday evening. A more brilliant gathering was never seen in the Star Theatre than that which filled the parquette and balcony and half filled the family circle on that windy, rainy night, and a more cordial wel-



come was never given to an actor than that which greeted Mr. Irving, when, as Mathias in 'The Bells,' he rushed past the window of the lonesome little inn, threw open the door, sprang out of the storm into the bright, warm room, and shook the snow from his coat and shaggy hair. If the distinguished actor had ever doubted the disposition of the American people to receive him courteously and hear him without prejudice, his doubts must have vanished in the warmth of this reception more quickly than the snow disappeared from his shoulders in the glow of the tavern fire. None but a dullard could have failed to be inspired by such an emphatic demonstration of good feeling—and Mr. Irving was never accused of dullness. His appreciation of the heartiness of his welcome was as apparent in his acting as in the graceful speech in which he returned thanks for it and bespoke an equally cordial greeting for Miss Terry.

But people had come to criticise as well as to enjoy. To many persons in the boxes and in the body of the house, Mr. Irving's acting was an old story. They were there to renew their acquaintance with one whom they had seen time and again in his own theatre, on their annual passage through London to the Continent. They had seen him not only in 'The Bells,' but in the classic dramas in which he has since widened, if he has not deepened, the impression made in that singular melodrama, twelve years ago. In this respect they had a marked advantage over the majority of those present, who not only saw the visiting actor for the first time, but were unable to compare him with other players in the same part, 'The Bells' being a play almost unknown to the American public. It was impossible to judge from his impersonation of this one character what would be Mr. Irving's peculiarities in other parts. It was impossible to determine whether the half-palsied legs of Mathias would be seen again the next night, supporting the body from which the uneasy head of Charles I. was shortly to be severed. It was impossible to say whether or no the sepulchral voice of the crime-haunted burgomaster would anon be heard issuing from the love-wracked bosom of Claude Melnotte. One could prophesy, but not with certainty, concerning the stage-strut, which, in 'The Bells,' was too often substituted for the ordinary gait of real life or the more natural stage-walk with which we are nowadays familiar.

But from Mr. Irving's first appearance, some auguries could well be made. It was seen—by those who before had only heard it—that he was a man of fine presence, and handsome, mobile face—a face of the type of Edwin Booth's, though of less beauty. His voice, too, is of somewhat the same quality as the American actor's. In natural gifts the new-comer was evidently not deficient; and it was soon manifest that he had mastered every artifice of the stage. As the play progressed, he steadily strengthened his hold on the attention and sympathies of the audience—taking a stronger grasp on their minds, however, than on their hearts. The first unmistakable touch of the artist was seen in the play of expression on the murderer's face, when his daughter caressed him, with the words, 'How good you are!' Delicate and natural bits of speech and action were not wanting. Neither were gross exaggerations and affectations. One's judgment wavered, but not long.

The third act—the last—was more even in merit. There was little or nothing in it to shock the taste or reason; there was a great deal in it to win the applause even of unfriendly critics. So vivid a piece of acting is not often seen on any stage. The dream in which the murderer's conscience puts him on trial and condemns him to the gallows was conceived and executed in a manner which can only be described as masterly. In facial expression, gesture, voice, there was a finish, a subtlety, a variety, that few liv-

ing actors could bring to bear on the representation of such a scene. The scene is weird and impressive to a degree. It is almost, if not absolutely, unique. It is a sight to make innocent hearts shudder, and guilty ones quake with fear. Once seen it can never be blotted from the memory. Mr. Irving cannot lose his hold on the English or the American public so long as he can play the part of Mathias as he played it last Monday night. We do not wish to prejudge him, but we shall be surprised if he gives a more satisfactory performance of any other of the characters he has chosen for his American tour. In 'The Bells' he shows himself to be an actor of high rank, though by no means of the highest. For the present, however, we will not attempt to determine his exact position in the small body of English-speaking tragedians.

On Tuesday night Mr. Irving was seen in Wills's historical drama, 'Charles I.' The performance was complete and excellent in almost all details. There was nothing to jar on the nerves of the audience except Mr. Irving's acting. The mannerisms that so well suited the character of the conscience-stricken peasant were unseemly in a king. There were times when the actor assumed a regal manner, and then the elegance of his bearing contrasted strangely with his eccentric behavior of the previous moment. In 'The Bells' the dramatist has done a great deal for the actor: in 'Charles I.' he has done little or nothing for him. The play is what the actor makes it. Mr. Irving's performance was uniformly interesting, at times even powerful; and the quietude of the last act, which so moved the audience, was a proof of the actor's strength. In this last scene, when he leaves his wife and children and goes out to his death, the curtain falls on a tableau instead of a shriek, and the audience sits spell-bound.

The great attraction of 'Charles I.' was the appearance of Miss Ellen Terry as the Queen. Acting so natural, so charming, so womanly, is not often seen upon our stage. She carried the audience with her from the moment she appeared, smiling, before the footlights, till the curtain hid her tear-dimmed eyes from view. Her success was immediate and complete. Her methods are in direct opposition to those of Mr. Irving. She is as natural as he is artificial, yet they play together perfectly. It is a harmony of striking contrasts. Miss Terry has taken from modern æstheticism all that is beautiful, while Mr. Irving has adopted its eccentricities and uglinesses. Miss Terry's movements are as graceful as Mr. Irving's are angular. Her step is as light as falling rose leaves; his, as heavy as the hand of fate. Her features are small and delicate; his, large and strong. American actresses may imitate Miss Terry to advantage, but to imitate Mr. Irving would make American actors ridiculous.

## Music

### At the New Opera House.

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE has introduced to us, since the opening night, a number of new singers, and its performances have been, on the whole, smoother and more satisfactory than the first one. Allowances must be made, of course, for the excitement attending the opening of so large a place of amusement, but even then we can hardly consider that the performance of 'Faust' was worthy of the artists whose names led the cast that evening. On the Wednesday following, Mme. Sembrich, of whom we have heard so much, made her first appearance in this country in her favorite rôle, Lucy Ashton in 'Lucia.' From all the accounts we have read of Mme. Sembrich, we have gathered that she is a singer of but one opera. From what we heard of her in this opera we should say that she was a singer of but one act. With the exception of the third act of

'Lucia,' Mme. Sembrich's performance was uninteresting. In the mad scene, however, she did some remarkable 'ornamental' work; but she has not the range that is claimed for her. Five of her upper notes are remarkable, and surprise one after hearing her in the rest of the opera; but even these five notes are not as pure, as clear, or as high, as the upper notes of Gerster's register. It may have been that she was nervous on the night of her first appearance and failed to do herself justice, but certainly her singing was a disappointment.

The best performance given at the new Opera House during the first week, taking it all through, was that of 'Trovatore' on Friday night. On that occasion Mme. Valleria reappeared before a New York audience, and Mme. Trebelli and Signor Stagno were heard for the first time. Mme. Valleria's voice has improved in some particulars since she was last heard here. It was never a great voice, but it was always agreeable and satisfactory. She is hardly an ideal Leonora, yet one feels no inclination to find fault with her performance. Mme. Trebelli, of whom we have heard so much and for so long, was not disappointing. Of course her voice has lost its youthful freshness, but under the control of such an artist a worn voice is much more interesting than a fresh one less artistically managed. Her Azucena is the best we have seen here since Mme. Gazzaniga played the part, ten or more years ago. Mme. Trebelli is a great singer; she is as great a singer as she ever was, though she has not the same voice; and there is something very satisfying in listening to so fine an artist. Mr. Abbey's new tenor, Signor Stagno, is a tenor of one note. It is perfectly evident throughout the opera that he is saving himself for that one note; and when it comes, it lifts the audience with it. It is the high C, so dear to the hearts of American

opera-goers, and without which they are utterly indifferent to the charms of '*Di quella pira*.' An American audience will go anywhere, sacrifice anything, to hear this one note—and Signor Stagno gives it to them in the most approved manner. It is a clear, full, ringing, chest note, without the slightest hint of falsetto. While the rest of his performance may be uninteresting, he is bound to attract audiences so long as he gives the high C as he gave it on Friday night.

#### At the Academy of Music.

MR. MAPLESON also has given us some new artists, principally tenors. One of them—Signor Bertini—who appeared in 'Rigoletto,' was a complete failure—so complete a failure that it was only the extreme good-nature of present Academy audiences that saved him from being hissed off the stage. It may be that a temporary indisposition interfered with his success (we believe he claimed something of the sort), but however this may be, the Academy audiences want no more of him. The other tenor, Signor Falletti—evidently a novice and quite inartistic in his methods—has a voice of considerable promise. His action is uneasy, and he wants drilling and experience; but with these, we believe he will make a most satisfactory member of the company. Signor Falletti was heard in 'Norma,' Mme. Pappenheim appearing as the priestess. This favorite German singer has lost as much in voice as she has in flesh since she was last heard in this city, some five years ago. Her 'Norma' was an unpleasant performance: her efforts to sing were painful, and the results inadequate. Once in a while she would sing a passage effectively, but on the whole she was only fair. After hearing Mme. Pappenheim in 'Norma' we are more than ever convinced that the German method of singing is unsuited to Italian opera.

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